

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 DHA-02 PM-03 SP-02 INR-05 CIAE-00
IO-03 NSC-05 NSCE-00 L-01 DODE-00 TRSE-00 SCA-01 H-01
/046 R

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-----041426Z 018835 /45
R 040101Z MAR 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SOFIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 048024

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, BU

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN BULGARIA

1. DEPARTMENT VERY MUCH APPRECIATES RECEIPT OF SOFIA 0411
REGARDING REPORTS OF BULGARIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS, AS
WELL AS EMBASSY'S RECENT CABLES ON REPORTS OF BULGARIAN
DISSIDENT INTELLECTUALS.

2. IN CONTEXT OF RECENT EXAMINATION WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT,
ON A WORLDWIDE BASIS, OF VARIOUS STRATEGIES FOR THE PRO-
MOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, QUESTION HAS ARISEN AS TO THE CUR-
RENT STATE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN BULGARIA. IT WAS SUGGESTED,
FOR EXAMPLE, THAT AMONG THE COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE
ONLY ALBANIA HAS A WORSE RECORD AT PRESENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS
THAN BULGARIA. OTHERS SUGGESTED THAT, WHILE LITTLE INFOR-
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MATION SEEMS AVAILABLE, THERE IS RELATIVELY LITTLE EVIDEN-
CE OF REPRESSION IN BULGARIA, ALBEIT PERHAPS BECAUSE THE
TIGHTNESS OF REGIME'S CONTROLS AND QUIESCENCE OF BULGARI-
AN CITIZENRY GIVE LITTLE CAUSE FOR REPRESSIVE ACTIONS.

3. WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT SOLID INFORMATION ON THIS SCORE
IS VERY HARD TO COME BY, DEPARTMENT NEVERTHELESS WOULD BE

VERY MUCH INTERESTED IN HAVING THE EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT
OF THE STATUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN BULGARIA, EITHER IN

RELATIVE OR ABSOLUTE TERMS. YOUR DESCRIPTION COULD USE-
FULLY INCLUDE ANY OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING POINTS: IMPRIS-
ONMENT FOR POLITICAL REASONS AND/OR PROLONGED IMPRISON-
MENT WITHOUT CHARGES; GENERAL TREATMENT OF PERSONS UNDER
ARREST AND DETENTION; TREATMENT OF INTELLECTUAL AND
STUDENT DISSIDENTS; DEGREE OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND
OF RELIGION; DEGREE OF FREEDOM TO CRITICIZE GOVERNMENT
POLICIES WITHOUT BEING DETAINED FOR "ANTI-STATE" ACTIVI-
TIES; DEGREE OF "POLITICIZATION" OF THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM;
AVAILABILITY OF LEGAL REMEDIES TO THOSE WHOSE RIGHTS ARE
VIOLATED; TREATMENT OF MINORITIES; FREEDOM OF TRAVEL AND
OF EMIGRATION, AND CONCERN FOR WESTERN REACTION TO HUMAN
RIGHTS CONDITIONS IN BULGARIA.

4. ADDITIONAL SUBSEQUENT REPORTING ON SUCH TOPICS, ALONG
LINES OF RECENT EMBASSY CABLES, WOULD ALSO BE MUCH APPRE-
CIATED.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, HUMAN RIGHTS, POLICIES, POLITICAL REPRESSION, POLITICAL PRISONERS, DISSIDENT FACTIONS, INTELLECTUALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 04-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE048024
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: CWSCHMIDT:TL
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770075-0467
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770391/aaaadcrk.tel
Line Count: 83
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 92b1adbd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3205056
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HUMAN RIGHTS IN BULGARIA
TAGS: SHUM, BU
To: SOFIA
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/92b1adbd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009